

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 were originally pending in the application. Claims 1-17 are rejected. Claim 8 is objected to. Claims 1, 7-9, and 11 have been amended. New claims 18-19 have been added. 2-4 have been cancelled. New claims 23 and 24 have been added. Claims 1-19 are now pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

I. Summary of Claim Amendments

Applicant believes that a brief explanation of the claim amendments will assist the Examiner when reconsidering the present application.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate limitations corresponding to claims 7 and 8 (claim 8 has been deemed to contain allowable subject matter at Paragraph 8 of the Office Action). It should be noted that the limitations incorporated into claim 1 are slightly broader than the limitations originally in claim 8.

For instance, claim 1 has been amended to recite the step of “activating pixels on said reconstructed image having an intensity value greater than an intensity of said expansion boundary during a previous iteration activating pixels” as opposed to “turning on all pixels...” as previously recited in claim 8.

Claim 1 has also been amended to recite the step of “removing pixels not connected to said starting location” as opposed to “removing any fine lines and clusters of pixels”.

Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to recite limitations related to “activating all pixels” and “removing fine lines and clusters of pixels”, respectively, which were recited in original claim 8.

Independent claim 11 has been amended to recite means for performing the steps that have been added to independent claim 1.

Applicant has found no teachings or suggestions in the prior art that render independent claims 1 and 11 unpatentable as amended.

II. Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 in view of Curwen

Claims 1-7, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Curwen.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate limitations from claims 7 and 8, as discussed above. Claim 9 has been amended to correspond to amended claim 1. Because

Curwen fails to teach or suggest the limitations related to refining said reconstructed image as recited in amended claim 1, applicant asserts that claims 1-7, 9, and 10 are allowable over the cited reference. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 102 in view of Curwen is therefore respectfully requested.

III. Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 in view of Kennedy

Claims 1-5 and 11-15 are rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Kennedy.

Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to incorporate limitations from claims 7 and 8, as discussed above. Because Kennedy fails to teach or suggest the limitations related to refining said reconstructed image as recited in amended in the independent claims, applicant asserts that claims 1-5 and 11-15 are allowable over the cited reference. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 102 in view of Kennedy is therefore respectfully requested.

IV. New Claims

Applicant has added new claims 18-19, both of which depend from independent claim 11. Claim 18 recites means for activating all pixels having intensity values greater than the intensity of said expansion boundary during the previous iteration. Claim 19 recites means for removing fine lines and clusters of pixels not connected to said starting location. The elements recited in claims 18 and 19 were originally recited in original claim 8.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that claim 8 has been found to contain allowable subject matter. Limitations of original claim 8 have been added to independent claims 1 and 11, as discussed above. Other limitations of original claim 8 are now recited in corresponding dependent claims 7-8 and 18-19. Formal allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

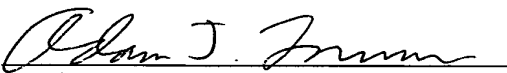
VI. Conclusion

Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that all rejections and objections cited by the Examiner have been overcome. Accordingly, the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

No fees are believed to be due for the filing of this Amendment. However, if any fees are deemed due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account No. 17-0055. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below if such would advance the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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